

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Please replace the sheet of drawings by the replacement sheet attached to this paper.

REMARKS

By the present amendment, the original drawing has been replaced by a replacement drawing showing a blocking system for the plates and markings on the plates. Also, the specification has been amended to add section titles, to incorporate the recitations of the original claims into the specification, and to add a generic description of the original drawing. It is submitted that the amendments to the drawing and to the specification do not add any new matter.

Further, claim 1 has been amended by incorporating therein the subject matter of claim 2, and further reciting that the plates have their main planes parallel to each other. Accordingly, claim 2 has been canceled and claims 5-6 have been amended to be dependent on claim 1 instead of claim 2. Further, new claims 7-14 have been added. Support for the amendments is found in the original application, in particular in the drawing.

The title has been amended to remove the term "metallic" and a comma.

As a preliminary, on page 5 of the Office Action, it is alleged that the Information Disclosure Statement filed with the application on June 28, 2004 is non-compliant because copies of the foreign patent references were not attached.

Withdrawal of the objection and consideration of the foreign patent references is respectfully requested. The Notice of Acceptance dated January 10, 2005 in this application confirms that the copies of the references cited in the International Search Report (ISR) have been received in this application. These references were those cited in the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS). For convenience, copies of GB 428003 and DE 10004541 cited in the ISR and listed in the IDS are attached to this paper.

Return of a copy of the form PTO-1449, showing that these foreign references have been considered, is respectfully requested.

Next, on page 2-4 of the Office Action, the specification and the drawings are objected to. Section titles are requested in the specification, and plate blockings and markings are requested in the drawings.

The specification has been amended to add a summary of the invention, a brief description of the figures, a generic description of the drawing, and section titles, and the drawing has been modified to show generic plate blockings and markings. Accordingly, it is submitted that the objections should be withdrawn.

Next, on pages 5-6 of the Office Action, claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by US 5,752,113 to Borden ("Borden").

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Present claim 1 recites that the device comprises three plates having their main planes parallel to each other and adapted to slide relative to each other. This construction is not taught in Borden in which bar 134 is oriented perpendicular to bars 122 and 128. In Borden, bar 122 rotates with respect to the support stand and carries bar 122, and therefore, Borden fails to teach or suggest the construction of the presently claimed invention.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejection should be withdrawn.

Next, on pages 6-7 of the Office Action, claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as anticipated by "Manfrotto product web pages."

The rejection is respectfully traversed. The present application is a U.S. national stage of a PCT application filed on December 30, 2002. The Manfrotto product web pages bear a handwritten date of December 30, 2003, so that they are not available as reference under section 102(a).

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejection should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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